



Cyrus Forough

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Cyrus Forough - Biography

Noted for the "fiery intensity" and "poetic vision" of his playing, Cyrus Forough's reviews comprise a lexicon of superlatives in more than a dozen languages. A Laureate of the **Tchaikovsky International Competition**, he has won first prize in the **Milwaukee Symphony Violin Competition**, was a finalist in the **Munich International Competition**, and with his wife **Steinway Artist Carolyn McCracken** as the **Forough/McCracken Duo**, won the **United States Artistic Ambassador Program's National Violin/Piano Duo Competition**. He also holds the **World Academy of Arts, Literature, and Media Award** in recognition of his contributions to classical music and education.

Mr. Forough's unique succession of studies in three cultural centers with three of the twentieth century's most legendary masters make singular his recognition as a prominent representative of the **Franco-Belgium school of violin playing**. When he was five years old he began studies with his mother, a graduate of the **Brussels Royal Conservatory of Music**, Belgium. In Brussels and Liege she studied under the tutelage of **E. Chaumont** and **L. Charlier**, both masters of the Franco-Belgium school. Forough also attended the **Brussels Royal Conservatory** where as the youngest ever to attend, he was exceptionally admitted at age nine to study with **Arthur Grumiaux**. He graduated with a **Superior Prize and Special Distinction Medal** at age sixteen. He then became one of only thirteen students chosen by national competition to attend Europe's most renowned school for promising young performers, the **Chapel Musicale Reine Elisabeth**, living and studying in Brussels for a total of twelve years. He then pursued post-graduate studies at the **Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory** for three years under the legendary **David Oistrakh**. Upon Mr. Oistrakh's death, Forough attended **Indiana University School of Music** for two and half years where he was personal assistant to his teacher **Josef Gingold**, who himself studied in Belgium under **Eugene Ysaye**.

Cyrus Forough has performed in recital, with orchestras, and in chamber music ensembles throughout Europe, Asia, and North and South America, including broadcasts on radio and television. His solo performances for international dignitaries have included command performances for **Queen Fabiola** and **Princess Paola of Belgium**, the former **Shah of Iran**, **President Anwar Sadat of Egypt**, and **President Kreiske of Austria**. He also gave a special performance for the birthday celebration of **Queen Sirikit of Thailand**. He has appeared at many summer festivals such as the **Weimar Festival in Germany**, the **Plovdiv Music Festival** in Bulgaria, the **International Schubert Festival at Indiana University**, and the **American Sacred Music Festival in Milwaukee** invited there by conductor **Lukas Foss**.

Mr. Forough has championed contemporary music and gave the **Milwaukee Symphony** premiere performance of the **Shostakovich First Violin Concerto** in 1985. He has performed the works of **Behzad Ranjbaran**, **Reza Vali**, and will be premiering **Vali's Khojasteh ("Majestic")**, which was dedicated to him at the **National Gallery in Washington DC** in January 2013. Other works include **Witold Lutoslawski's Chain 2, dialogue for violin & orchestra**, and

premiered **Alan Fletcher's Woman Holding a Balance**, also dedicated to him. The Forough/McCracken Duo performed **William Kraft's Double Play** with orchestra, and premiered the **Violin/Piano Sonata of Shostakovich** and **Central Park Reel by Lukas Foss** in numerous cities in the United States, the Caribbean, and South America.

Called "musical treasures of absolute mastery", the Forough/McCracken Duo has charmed and captivated audiences with the artistry of their unique duo partnership. They have performed in many concert venues, including the **Kennedy Center, the Phillips Collection, the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., and the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires**. As Artistic Ambassadors of the United States, they have concertized in many countries, performing in recitals and with orchestras, giving master classes and interviews, participating in symposiums and discussions with universities and conservatories, and giving benefit recitals for educational and medical foundations, all for the purpose of fostering goodwill and cultural understanding between people and nations.

Mr. Forough's dedication to teaching and his skill at communicating his art have earned him a reputation as one of the most sought after and most effective violin pedagogues, drawing students globally seeking admittance into his studio. Not only did he study with some of the greatest violin masters of the twentieth century, but he also is one of the few last living links to the great schools of violin playing and pedagogy. At present he is a full-time professor at **Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh**, and has taught as an Artist faculty member of the **Music Institute of Chicago's Academy for Gifted**, and was a visiting professor at **Eastman School of Music** in 2009 and 2010. In summer 2013 he will once again be a faculty member at the **Bowdoin International Music Festival in Brunswick, Maine** in addition to being a new faculty member at the **Schlern International Music Festival** in northern Italy. In the past he has also been a faculty member at summer festivals such as the **Meadowmount School of Music**; the **Indiana University String Academy, Bloomington**; the **Chateau de Champ, Paris**; the; the **International Music Academy in Pizen, Czech Republic**; the **Sulzbach-Rosenberg International Music Festival**, Germany and numerous others. Mr. Forough has been an adjudicator for competitions including the **Stulberg International Competition** and the **Sorantin International String Competition**, and conducted master classes at the aforementioned summer festivals and at the **Oberlin Conservatory of Music**; **Northwestern University**; the **Cleveland Institute of Music**; **Beijing Central Conservatory**; **Shanghai Conservatory of Music**; **Guangzhou Xinghai Conservatory of Music**; **Mount Royal College-Academy "Program for Gifted Youth" in residence, Calgary, Canada**; the **Glenn Gould School of the Toronto Royal Conservatory of Music**, and many others.

Ever since Mr. Forough joined the **Carnegie Mellon University School of Music** faculty, his college students have been frequent winners of the school-wide concerto competitions and have distinguished themselves in international and national competitions, which was unprecedented. Having taught students as young as six, his college and pre-college students have received first prizes, awards, and other prizes in countless international and national competitions including **Finalist and "Public**

Prize" at the Sibelius International Violin Competition, the Paganini Award at the Indianapolis International Violin Competition, Prizewinner at the Menuhin International Violin Competition, "Best Talent" at the Sarasate International Violin Competition, and others such as the Washington International Violin Competition, the Wieniawski International Violin Competition (3rd round), the Johansen International Violin Competition, the Klein International Violin Competition, the Stulberg International Violin Competition, the Cooper International Violin Competition, Illinois Bell Young People's Concerto competition performing live with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on televised winners concerts, and first prizes at the Fischhoff International, Rembrandt, and other chamber music competitions. Numerous students have been chosen to perform on "From the Top" at Carnegie Hall, New York, and throughout the nation, and broadcast on radio and television. His students have included winners of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts, and as Presidential Scholar. His students are also members of many professional orchestras including the Chicago Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Calgary Symphony Orchestra, Buenos Aires Philharmonic Orchestra, Argentina, and many others.

Mr. Forough performs on the 1718 "Wilmotte" Antonius Stradivarius.

Cyrus Forough - Reviews

Cyrus Forough...is an extremely talented violinist who balances his virtuoso technique with a noble tonal sonority and an elegant manner of performance...I have great faith and hope in him.

David Oistrakh

Cyrus Forough is a wonderful violinist in every respect whose qualities as an artist have been admired by the leading violinists of the world.

Cyrus Forough is a superb violinist.

Josef Gingold

Distinguished Professor of Music, Indiana University

Cyrus Forough is in a handful of great violin teachers.

Ruggiero Ricci

I have known Cyrus Forough for many years...His outstanding talent was displayed at the Tchaikovsky International Violin Competition. Not only does he possess a beautiful tone and musicality, but remarkable violin mastery as well. I believe his performances will attract the admiration of both the public and musicians alike.

Leonid B. Kogan

I congratulate you on the fine work you do (...with Rachel Lee...). My best wishes for your continued success.

Dorothy Delay

Cyrus Forough is a talented and gifted artist. He possesses great technical freedom as well as highly refined artistry...He is an excellent violinist...and will become a remarkable and outstanding artist.

Oleh Kryssa

Assistant Professor, Moscow Conservatory

The violinist Cyrus Forough is a highly talented musician. His fine sense of style, musicality, and instrumental perfection is rare. His execution of Shostakovich's First Concerto had a profound effect on me. He displayed his exquisite talent, penetrating the work with a profound understanding of its psychological depth.

Rudolf Barshai, Conductor

Cyrus Forough is a remarkably interesting musician who possesses all the qualities necessary to become premier violinist. He has an extremely beautiful sonority, a superb quality of technique, and noble style of playing...His musical understating is supplemented by his rich cultural background...Forough is a true artist.

Inna Kollegorskaja, Pianist, accompanist in the studio of David Oistrakh

This young couple [Cyrus Forough and Carolyn McCracken] is rather amazing.

Lukas Foss, Conductor and composer

Mr. Forough...is a thorough, master teacher who seeks to instill solid technical foundation as well as develop in a student a sense of what is necessary to unleash music's profound communicative powers.

A gifted violinist himself, Mr. Forough has had outstanding training from some of the 20th century's greatest international masters, including Arthur Grumiaux and David Oistrakh. Under such guidance, it is not surprising that he captured significant international competition prizes. He has amassed a wealth of high-level professional performance experience and is a recognized due recitalist.

His unusual commitment to teaching at the pre-collage level is especially noteworthy. A teacher who understands the importance of making his top tier pedagogical expertise available to pre-college students is one who is truly laying groundwork for the future health and vitality of the music profession as well as for the American culture in general.

David Cerone, President of the Cleveland Institute of Music

Cyrus performed beautifully with impeccable rhythm, lovely tone quality, musical conviction, and strength of character. He is a violinist you ought to hear!

Paul Polivnick, Music Director, Alabama Symphony Orchestra

Mr. Cyrus Forough is known to me as an unusually gifted violinist. His outstanding teachers and his great successes as a concretizing artist in America, Europe, and Asia speak for a great future...in a recent concert, Mr. Forough showed himself as a brilliant violin virtuoso and a musician of depth.

Julius Herford, Professor Emeritus of Music, Indiana University.

Forough displayed deep interpretive insight, technical mastery and skillfully revealed different aspects of his brilliant gift...a musician with a great future.

Pravda, Moscow

A triumph...Forough evoked a deeply poetic vision of mystic quality...he gives the music his essence and then the miracle happens.

La Libre Belgique, Brussels

There is little doubt that the Forough Duo has a bright and promising future. The quality of their playing was impeccable from start to finish...marvelously fresh, lively and spirited...maintaining delicate balance between parts and displaying subtle command of tempo variation. Violinist Forough offered a dashing stage presence and a superior command of the art of interpretation. One is immediately struck by the beautiful tone he evokes from his instrument...classic ingredients of success: rich, smooth, full-bodied tone coupled with a dash of the ethereal. If performances like this in front of a completely captivated audience are an example of the duo's high caliber musicianship and professional decorum, then the world should be their oyster.

Ann Arbor News

A world class soloist...a musician of international stature.

Milwaukee Sentinel

The duo was nothing short of magnificent...an astoundingly brilliant performance...tumultuous and appreciative applause continued...all our expectations did not imagine that we would have been given such a rich treat of music by these artists.

The Star, Jamaica

The performance embodied fiery enthusiasm...in addition to an outstanding technique he revealed a marvelous musical vitality which gave us great pleasure.

Le Soir, Brussels

'Don't ever die!' was the admiring scream of the audience after the ovations were received by the Forough/McCracken couple. Cyrus impressed the public with his technical virtuosity, the purity of his harmonics, and the skill and velocity of his staccatos in the Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso of Saint-Saens. As the last piece of the program, his rendition could do no less than unleash the ovations.

La Nacion, Buenos Aires

Warsaw's audience especially loved violinist Cyrus Forough. His instrumental ability and beautiful cantilenas won enthusiastic and prolonged applause.

Warsaw News, Poland

An abundant quantity of beauty...their rendition was of the highest level...a magnificent display of virtuosity and warmth...the Forough/McCracken Duo reached absolute 'maestria'.

Los Andes, Mendoza

Forough's rendering of the Shostakovich Violin Concerto No. 1 was especially authoritative and unusually expressive...illuminating performance.

The Milwaukee Journal

Forough executed his program with perfection and with profound musicality.

Gazet van Antwerpen, Belgium

Masterful...his performance was a revelation for everyone. His beautifully balanced control quickly gripped the audience. He has all the solidarity and sincerity of his master, the late David Oistrakh.

Kayhan International

In his performance of Hindemith's Concerto for violin, Cyrus Forough evoked a deeply poetic vision of mystic quality emanating from the purest sources...extremely luminous sonority...stark beauty of phrasing...he explores in depth an enlightened technique which is precise, pure and profound, allowing no barrier between mind and matter...most moving sincerity...it is not enough to say that he is a virtuoso of precision and depth: one must state that his lyricism effaces all artificiality and infidelity, and that he attains such a purity of style that he quite naturally transforms the most austere moments of musical art into something that ripples and flows resplendently. In expressing the classicism and hidden magic of this austere composer, Forough succeeded in conveying the intrinsic essence of the work. Deeply inspired...he expertly revealed that however authentic be the maturity, it can only really come into its own through inner happiness.

"Le Journal", Michel Sorouille

His presence on stage is remarkable, grand and solid. His charm seduces the audience immediately with impressionable courage and spirited boldness.

Vers l'Avenir, Brussels, Belgium

...he approached the Tchaikovsky Concerto with the caresses of a tamer...a magnificent violinist, he makes the music his and enriches it; he gives it his essence and then the miracle happens...thoughtful...refined, warm phrasing...every note was a poetic world and spiritual creation that honored the composer...he possesses a clear, precise and prodigious technique, superbly free left hand and magnificently supple control of the bow, a pure and perfect use of the arm and entire body. His profound sonority is comparable exactly to the great David Oistrakh, intimate, pure

and vibrant. Lyrical at all times and always in superb control of himself, of the score, and of the music entirely...he adds something angelic to the diabolical parts of the score. Because of his magnificent qualities, the second movement was unique. His technique finds in the most secret and intimate places, the most pure and vibrant face of its truth...the finale, under the fingers of the knowledgeable violinist and with flying bow (which was at the same time separated from any Paganinism) was a lesson of beautiful virtuosity, of eloquence and precision. He was justly ovationed and the public demanded encores. He gave himself magnificently. The music was served in a noble manner and we cannot thank him enough for it. With the Concerto he traveled through the royal kingdom of music and conducted us all happily to the end of the voyage.

Michel Sorouille, Journal de Teheran

Forough showed great confidence and precise interpretation. He drew forth from his violin the sweetest and most luscious voice. It is refreshing to see a young musician who does not, as so many "rising stars", seem to need the help of various flairs and embellishments, but adheres strictly to pure, classical technique and musicality.

Teheran Journal

The Forough Duo was in perfect accord. Forough's brilliant technique, McCracken's florid touch and their fine attunement to each other made them a wonderfully well-matched duo. No doubt they exemplified the best America has to offer in classical music...they were an inspiration and audiences were enraptured with their performances.

The Daily Gleaner, Venezuela